

Far-Fetched Pets

**YOUR
PET PENGUIN**

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By Bobbie Hamsa



Far-Fetched Pets

YOUR PET PENGUIN

By Bobbie Hamsa
Illustrations by Tom Dunnington

Consultant:
Caryn Schrenzel
Bird Department
Lincoln Park Zoo, Chicago



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To Dick and Muggs

CAUTION

Far-fetched pets can live only in your imagination. So don't ask for one for your birthday or Christmas. Go to the zoo or visit the library. There you can learn more about your favorite far-fetched pet.

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Your pet penguin.

(Far-fetched pets)

SUMMARY: Discusses the pleasures of having a penguin as a pet, including his ability to punch out paper dolls and fetch the mail on a cold day. Gives instructions for his general care.

[1. Penguins—Anecdotes, facetiae, satire, etc.]

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This is a penguin.
An Adélie Penguin.
Pretend that he is your pet.

He has a white feathered front.

A black feathered back.

Pink webbed feet.

A strong pair of flippers that used
to be wings.

And stumpy little legs that make him
waddle.

What will you name your new pet?





CARE AND FEEDING OF YOUR PET

It costs a lot to feed a penguin.
He eats only the finest seafood.
And krill, squid, and plankton are
not that easy to find.
He will eat crab, lobster, or fish.
And he'll clean his plate of
almost anything.

Give your penguin ice water to drink.
(But in a very small bowl or he'll
swim in it.)

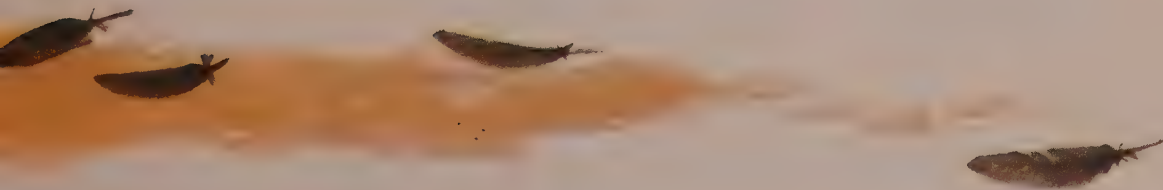




You'll never have to groom your pet.
He takes good care of himself.
All he needs is a nice cold shower.
A blow dryer to fluff his feathers.
Gargle for his fishy breath.
And a little sandpaper to sharpen
his beak.



In the spring, you'll notice your pet
acts strangely.
He's crabby.
He won't eat.
And his feathers fall out on the floor.
Don't bother taking him to the vet.
He's just growing a brand new coat.



A penguin is a bird all right.
But not an ordinary bird.
He can't fly
(except through water).
He can't live in a bird cage.
Or eat birdseed.
He can't deliver babies to people's
houses.
Or messages tied to his legs.
He can't sing.
Or learn to talk.



But he can hatch a few eggs for
science class.





Penguins need a cold place to sleep.
Perhaps your Dad owns an ice factory?
Or a skating rink?
Or maybe you live near the South Pole?
If not, buy a great big ice bucket
and keep it full.
Where will you put your pet penguin?



If he's young, your pet is called
a chick.

He's gray and fuzzy.

When just hatched he'll fit inside
a teacup.

Even when he's all grown up,
he'll be littler than you are now.



Penguins are gregarious.
(That means they're always ready
for a party.
They're even dressed for one.)
They come from great big rowdy
families.



So they're used to lots of noise.
Take him with you to the day-care center.
To recess.
To birthday parties.
And hockey games.
He'll feel right at home.



Your penguin can surf without a surfboard.
Skin dive without a mask.
Paddle a boat without an oar.
And play baseball without a bat.
(But he's nearsighted,
So don't expect a lot of homers.)

Your penguin loves to dance.
He likes to travel.
He's sweet, loving, and playful.
He's also nosy and curious.
So if you have a secret hiding place,
don't tell *him* where it is.







TRAINING

Your penguin can learn many things.

And once one penguin learns something,
all the other penguins will do what he does too!



His beak is sharp and pointy.
So teach him to punch out stickers
and paper dolls . . .
make holes in the wall for your posters . . .
plant seeds in the garden . . .
hook a rug for Mom . . .
or whittle a present for Father's Day.

He can reach nickels lost in storm sewers . . .
open sunflower seeds or peanut shells . . .
find fishing worms in your lawn.





He can eat a cookie and leave the frosting . . .
peck the mushrooms out of your salad . . .
pick the sesame seeds off your bun . . .
and the walnuts out of your brownies.



His flippers can flatten pizza dough . . .
make nice thin sugar cookies . . .
tenderize tough meat . . .
and flip flapjacks without hitting
the ceiling.

He can brush the lint off Dad's blue suit . . .
stir up the bubbles in your bubble bath . . .
and keep rain off the windshield when
the wipers don't work.





He'll dry Mom's nail polish . . .
give Dad a nifty back rub . . .
flag down a taxi whenever you want one . . .
and clap his flippers for your Knock-Knock jokes
(no matter how bad they are)!



You'll be glad you chose a penguin
when he's fetching the mail on cold,
cold days . . .

bringing you home when you've gotten lost . . .
letting you ride him down a snowy hill . . .
and giving the whole family swimming
lessons.

But the nicest thing about owning a
penguin is

he will make you laugh no matter
what he's doing!

These are only a few of the things
your pet can do.

Can you think of more?



If you take good care of him,
your penguin will live maybe 10 years.
And you'll say he's the best pet you ever had.

Facts about your pet Adélie Penguin (Pygosclis adeliae)

Size at hatching: about 40 grams

Size of egg: about 2 inches

Days of incubation: 33-38 days

Number of newborn: 1-2

Average size when grown: about 14 lbs. and 18 inches high

Type of food eaten: Krill (a type of shrimplike animal
in the order *Euphausiacea*), some small fish

Amount of food eaten daily in captivity: 30-50 small smelt (fish)

Expected lifespan: over 10 years

Names-male: none

female: none

young: chick

group: adults live in groups called colonies,
penguins nest in rookeries,
young live in nurseries called crèches.

Where found: Rim of the Antarctic continent and surrounding Islands,
the Antarctic Peninsula, and Southern Antarctic Islands.

About the Author:

Bobbie Hamsa was born and raised in Nebraska, far away from any far-fetched pets. She has a Bachelor of Arts Degree in English Literature from the University of Nebraska. She is married and has a son, John.

Bobbie Hamsa is an advertising copywriter in Omaha. She writes print, radio, and television copy for a full range of accounts, including Mutual of Omaha's "Wild Kingdom," the five-time Emmy Award winning wild animal series and sometime resource for far-fetched pets.

About the Artist:

Tom Dunnington divides his time between book illustration and wildlife painting. He has done many books for Children Press, as well as working on textbooks, and is a regular contributor to "Highlights for Children." Tom lives in Oak Park, Illinois.

FAR-FETCHED PETS

Your Pet Bear
Your Pet Beaver
Your Pet Camel
Your Pet Elephant
Your Pet Giraffe
Your Pet Gorilla
Your Pet Kangaroo
Your Pet Lion
Your Pet Penguin
Your Pet Sea Lion



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